

# Parents, Schools and Law Enforcement Hold a Piece of the Puzzle in Preventing School Threats



**Delaware**— All online or verbal threats toward a school will result in serious consequences. It is important to know the Delaware State Police will dedicate resources to investigate each one regardless of the person's intent. The responsibility for keeping our schools safe belongs to everyone in the community.

Parents, Schools and Law Enforcement play a key role to ensure schools are safe learning environments. Parents who remain vigilant with their children's online activities and social media sites may detect unusual behaviors and prevent potential problems. Parents can help by implementing certain parameters like rules and expectations of their children and watching for any warning signs that your teen may be in trouble. Keeping the lines of communication open, staying involved and

connected are some of the best ways to prevent bad teen behavior.

Schools continue to help by enhancing student-teacher relationships in hopes of noticing unusual behavior and building trust so students are more apt to share information. While our schools districts have measures in place to deal with and prevent threats and other emergency situations, it is on all of us to do our part. We have to deal with threats in the appropriate manner so children can learn in a safe environment.

Currently, more teenagers face severe charges for online and verbal threats against schools, students and staff. Usually, students who make these threats will be identified and interviewed by the police. A comprehensive investigation will be conducted for each violation of the law whether the intent was a hoax or more importantly a real threat. School Resource Officers and Detectives will respond to all online and verbal threats and will conduct a lawful search of the suspect's person, locker, vehicle and residence for items that could be used in an actual attack like weapons, firearms, written plans or anything suspicious or incriminating. If necessary the FBI will be contacted to assist with the investigation. Even if it's a hoax or a real threat against a school, it is vital to know serious consequences can result, as these threats can cause public panic:

- Those responsible can be charged with Terroristic Threatening, Disorderly Conduct and Cyber Threatening and can be either a class F or G felony which can result in prison time and/or probation
- Severe penalties and fines of \$1000 to \$2500
- Community service; 100 hours or more
- School sanctions like suspensions and expulsions
- The student can be sent to an alternative school or even change districts due to the unfortunate side effects of becoming a social outcast within that school community.

- Grades could suffer and can even result in having to repeat a grade or, worse yet, not being allowed to graduate.
- The student may not be allowed to participate in school sports.
- A mental health evaluation may be mandated by the court and required by the school before any child can return.

It's imperative to know that any person can be guilty of terroristic threatening if it is likely to cause an evacuation of a school, building, place of assembly, or facility of public transportation. If it causes a serious inconvenience or includes the reckless disregard of the risk of causing terror or serious inconvenience at a daycare facility, nursery or preschool, kindergarten, elementary, secondary or vocational-technical school it can result in a felony arrest.

The crime of Terroristic Threatening can also bring criminal intimidation charges. The fear brought by threatening posts can cause many students and staff to stay home rather than potentially taking the risk of going to school. Many students do not understand the consequences of their actions until they are arrested, charged and put into the juvenile justice system. The consequences would help the student to understand the severity of making threats. Finally, this conviction will follow them and will have to be reported on any job or college application. If students are convicted of a felony and develop a criminal record it could prevent them from joining the military, being accepted into college or it may even interfere with getting a job.

[Troopers Arrest Suspect for Threats Made to Middle School](#)

[DuPont School Social Media Threat Not Related to Delaware](#)

[Troopers Arrest Suspect for Threat Made to High School](#)

[Troopers Arrest Juvenile for Threats Made to a High School](#)

[Troopers Arrest Suspect for Threat Made to High School](#)

[Troopers Investigate Threat to School](#)

[Student Arrested after Threats Made to School](#)

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***Presented by the Director of Public Information, Sergeant Richard D. Bratz***

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